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Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Report on the meetings of the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development

I. Introduction

1. At its thirtieth session, in 1997, the Commission on Population and Development authorized the Bureau to hold intersessional meetings in preparation for its sessions.[1] In 2006, in resolution 2006/1 on its methods of work, the Commission requested its Bureau to meet as frequently as necessary in preparation for the annual sessions of the Commission. The Commission also stressed the importance of making written reports on the meetings of the Bureau.[2] In accordance with resolution 2006/1, the Bureau held two meetings in New York on 21 October and 15 December 2008.

2. The first meeting of the Bureau, on 21 October 2008, was attended by Elena Zúñiga Herrera (Chairperson) via teleconference. Present also were Ivanka Tasheva, Raja Nushirwan Zainal Abidin, Yera Ortiz de Urbina and Irene Bwalya Muloshi Tembo. Present at the second meeting of the Bureau, on 15 December 2008, were Ms. Zúñiga (Chairperson), Ms. Tasheva, Mr. Abidin, Ms. Ortiz de Urbina and Ms. Tembo. The Director of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and a representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) were present at all meetings of the Bureau.

3. The present report summarizes the discussions of the Bureau at those meetings as well as the conclusions reached and the recommendations made.

* E/CN.9/2009/1.

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 5* (E/1997/25), para. 52.

[2] Commission on Population and Development decision, 2005/2.

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II. Summary of the deliberations of the Bureau

A. Organization of work for the forty-second session of the Commission

4. The Bureau reviewed the organization of work for the forty-second session and found it acceptable.

B. Keynote speakers

5. At its thirty-eighth session, in its decision 2005/2, the Commission welcomed the format of inviting keynote speakers to the sessions of the Commission and requested the Bureau to make the necessary arrangements for their participation and to inform members accordingly. In accordance with that decision, the Bureau, after discussing the issue, decided that three keynote speakers would be invited to address the Commission on the special theme "The contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals" and that each speaker would be allotted an hour to make a presentation and have an interactive dialogue with members of the Commission. The Bureau selected David Canning, Jean-Pierre Guengant and Zeba Sathar as keynote speakers. Mr. Canning, Professor at the Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard University, would be invited to speak on "Population growth and changing age structures: implications for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals". Mr. Guengant, Director of the Institute for Research and Development in Ouagadougou, would be asked to speak on "The impacts of population growth on the least developed countries, with special emphasis on the role of reproductive health". Ms. Sathar, Senior Programme Associate with the Population Council in Islamabad, would speak on "Gender, population and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals". As has become customary, the Bureau recommended that the working group be adjourned during the presentations made by keynote speakers.

C. Participation of relevant United Nations entities in the Commission on Population and Development

6. The Bureau noted that the topic of the forty-second session was relevant for a number of United Nations entities, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the World Health Organization, the United Nations University and others. Thus, the Bureau requested the Chairperson of the Commission to encourage relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to participate in the Commission's session and to invite them to consider organizing side-events during the session. As in other sessions of the Commission, the Bureau welcomed the involvement of UNFPA in organizing a side-event to the forty-second session.

D. Communication of the Chairman with members of the Commission

7. The Bureau requested its Chairperson to send a letter to the members of the Commission underscoring the need to have technical representatives attend the forty-second session, that is, specialists in population and development, public health and population policy. The letter would also provide guidance to members of the Commission regarding the items under which statements could be made and would outline the relevance of the various items on the agenda of the forty-second session. Information about how to have access to preliminary versions of the documentation for the session would also be included. The letter would also explain the proposed ways for the Commission to contribute to the 2009 annual ministerial review by the Economic and Social Council on the theme of "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health".

E. Relationship of the Commission on Population and Development with the Economic and Social Council

8. The Bureau noted that Ivan Piperkov, Chairperson of the forty-first session of the Commission, in consultation with the current Chairperson, Elena Zúñiga Herrera, had made a statement to the 2008 annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council in which he had stressed the importance of slowing population growth to facilitate adjustment to climate change and the mitigation of problems related to that change.

9. Ms. Zúñiga Herrara informed the Bureau that, in her capacity as Chairperson of the Commission, she had participated in a panel discussion held during the 2008 session of the Economic and Social Council on ways of combating violence against women. In her statement, Ms. Zúñiga had built on the statements made by Commission members during the consideration of that topic at the fortieth session and had underscored the commitment to eliminate violence against women of all ages that had been reflected in the resolution adopted at that session.

10. The Bureau was informed about the meeting that would be convened in New York on 27 January 2009 between the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council and the chairs of the functional commissions to discuss the various ways in which the functional commissions might contribute to the annual ministerial review. The Chairperson suggested that there were several ways in which the Commission could contribute: (a) by requesting, once more, that the Chairperson of the Commission make a statement at the annual ministerial review to highlight the contributions of population and development issues to the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health; (b) by inviting the President of the Council to address the Commission under item 6 of its agenda for the forty-second session in order to launch a discussion on the relevance of population issues to the attainment of the goals and commitments on global public health; and (c) by requesting the Secretariat to look into the possibility of organizing a side-event at the time of the annual ministerial review that would highlight the interrelations between population issues and global health.

11. The Bureau agreed with the proposals made by the Chairperson and noted that the theme of the 2009 annual ministerial review was closely linked to that of the

Commission in 2009, so that it would be straightforward to highlight how the work of the Commission and, in particular, the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, was helping to promote global health.

12. In view of the above, the Bureau noted that the procedure followed for representation of the Commission at the annual ministerial review in 2008 could be repeated in 2009, namely, that the Chairperson of the forty-second session of the Commission would represent the Commission at the 2009 annual ministerial review.

13. The Bureau requested the Chairperson to transmit to the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council, in writing, the suggestions listed in paragraph 10 above.

F. Special theme for the forty-fourth session of the Commission

14. The Bureau recalled the Commission's decision 2008/101, in which the Commission decided that the special theme for its forty-third session, in 2010, would be "Health, morbidity, mortality and development". The Bureau took note of the need to establish a multi-year work programme for the Commission and discussed various possible themes that might be considered in 2011. In doing so, the Bureau took into account the calendar of known events and activities in other relevant bodies of the United Nations, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The Bureau also considered the themes that the Commission had covered in the past. The Bureau noted that the theme of reproductive health had last been covered in 2002 and that focusing on that issue, in conjunction with fertility, in 2011 would be a valuable contribution to the preparation of the final review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in 2014 and to the review of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Bureau therefore recommended that the theme for the Commission's forty-fourth session in 2011 be "Fertility, reproductive health and development".

G. Resolutions and decisions

15. The Bureau recommended that the Commission consider adopting the following resolutions or decisions: (a) a decision on the draft agenda for the forty-third session; (b) a decision on the theme for its forty-fourth session in 2011; and (c) a resolution on the special theme of the forty-second session, namely, "The contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals".

16. As for previous sessions, the Bureau recommended that a working group be established at the start of the resumed forty-second session of the Commission to discuss issues that might result in resolutions or decisions. The working group should begin its work on the afternoon of the first day of the resumed session of the Commission. The Bureau also recommended that the Chairperson of the Commission distribute initial drafts of resolutions and decisions to facilitate the deliberations of the working group. The Bureau further requested that the Chairperson's drafts be made available to members of the Commission and the

regional groups three weeks prior to the resumption of the forty-second session of the Commission.

H. Briefing for members of the Commission

17. The Bureau recommended that the Director of the Population Division organize, about a month prior to the resumption of the forty-second session of the Commission, a briefing for delegations on the status of documentation for the session, the organization of work and the resolutions and decisions likely to be considered by the Commission.

18. The Bureau stressed the importance of the timely availability of documents for the forty-second session in order to facilitate the preparation of statements by delegations. The Bureau endorsed the posting on the Internet of advanced unedited versions of those documents in English.

I. Conclusions and recommendations

19. **The Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development met twice in New York on 21 October and 15 December 2008. The conclusions and recommendations resulting from those two meetings are summarized below.**

20. **The Bureau recommended the adoption of the draft organization of work for the forty-second session of the Commission.**

21. **The Bureau decided that three keynote speakers would be invited to address the Commission on the special theme, "The contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals".**

22. **The Bureau decided to invite the President of the Economic and Social Council to address the Commission under item 6 of the draft agenda for its forty-second session.**

23. **The Bureau suggested that the Chairperson of the forty-second session of the Commission make a statement at the ministerial review to be conducted by the Economic and Social Council in 2009.**

24. **The Bureau recommended that the special theme for 2011 be "Fertility, reproductive health and development".**

25. **The Bureau recommended that a working group be established at the start of the resumed forty-second session of the Commission to discuss issues that might result in resolutions or decisions. The working group should begin its work on the afternoon of the first day of the resumed session of the Commission.**

26. **The Bureau recommended that the Commission consider adopting: (a) a decision on the agenda for the forty-third session; (b) a decision on the theme for the forty-fourth session in 2011; and (c) a resolution on the special theme of the forty-second session, namely, "The contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the**

internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals".

27. **The Bureau requested that the Chairperson of the Commission distribute initial drafts of resolutions and decisions that might facilitate the deliberations of the working group. The Bureau requested that the Chairperson's drafts be made available to members of the Commission and to the regional groups at least three weeks prior to the resumption of the forty-second session of the Commission.**

28. **The Bureau recommended that the Director of the Population Division organize, a month prior to the resumption of the forty-second session of the Commission, a briefing for delegations on the status of documentation for the session, the organization of work and the resolutions and decisions likely to be considered by the Commission.**